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ABSTRACT

This paper, focusing on young children's need for privacy, describes a study conducted to determine the manner in which children in day care centers resolve the problem of reduced space and time for privacy. A pilot study revealed that children displayed three privacy seeking behaviors: (1) verbal and nonverbal territorial behavior (use or defense of a delimited space or object as an exclusive preserve); (2) verbal and nonverbal defense of personal space (an effective boundary control mechanism which regulates the intensity of communications with others); (3) verbal and nonverbal physical privacy seeking (physical separation from others by placing visible barriers between self and others). These privacy seeking behaviors form a matrix of types for observation within each of the four activity areas studied: the block and sand area, the play-dough and housekeeping areas, the games area and the alley. Sixty children aged 3 to 5 years were observed over a period of three months in each of the four areas in the morning and afternoon free play periods. Overall results indicated that: (1) age was not a significant factor in the mode of expression of privacy seeking in this particular age group; and (2) privacy seeking behavior was influenced by the activity area and the time of the day. Privacy implications for teaching and programming in day care settings are examined, and specific kinds of settings recommended. (CS)

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THE NEED FOR PRIVACY AND THE APPLICATION OF PRIVACY TO THE DAY CARE SETTING

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I Introduction

The concept of privacy assumes different meanings for a variety of societies, cultures, professions and socioeconomic groups. In some societies the concept of privacy is virtually unknown, e.g. Samoans, Tlingit Indians, Tikopia of Polynesia,[1] whereas in North America emphasis is placed upon individuality and privacy is recognized as a need for all people in the society. The resources of various nations tend to determine the extent to which individual privacy may exist. In areas where families live in one-room homes, physical privacy is not possible. In North America large families in lower socioeconomic milieu frequently find themselves in confined and crowded physical environments and in response to their cultural norms, their need for privacy may find expression on the psychological rather than the physical level. The legal profession has responded to the norms of the North American society by enacting laws to protect people against the invasion of their privacy. Although the North American population tends to value its personal privacy, it views privacy seeking in the public domain as negative and anti-social behavior; one ought to seek privacy within the confines of one's home, but not at work, nor at school.

Privacy may be defined in a manner which involves groups of people in close association with each other or it may be defined in terms of a single individual. It is a dynamic, everchanging process whereby one may regulate the amount of interaction with others. The important aspect of privacy is that it

is a dialectic process, involving both a restriction of interaction and a seeking of interaction (Altman, 1975). At times a person may wish to be alone, and at other times may seek social interaction. If one is able to freely set the boundaries which define one's desires accurately and then remove oneself from these protective boundaries, then one is effectively controlling the levels of desired privacy. We have traditionally viewed privacy in the extreme--as a "shutting off of the self from others," (Westin, 1967) but it is more of a dynamic, regulatory process.

Although the nature of human privacy behaviour has been studied by psychologists, the majority of this research has been conducted with adults and their perceptions of privacy. Privacy is a concept which is not commonly associated with the behaviour patterns of young children and relatively few researchers have dealt with it at this level. Schwartz (1968) has described privacy in children from infancy through later childhood and maintains that at each developmental stage, privacy is expressed differently. Even the infant has a need for privacy which is expressed by going to sleep or wriggling away from an adult when contact is no longer desired.[2] Wolfe and Laufer (1974) have studied the relationship between the meanings of privacy and associated behavioral patterns as a function of age and age-related experiences. Their study of 5 to 17-year-olds has led them to believe that the concept of privacy becomes more complex with age and that the developmental stages in the concept of privacy are paralleled by the stages of development

of autonomy and a sense of psychological self.[3]

Repeated observations of young children, aged 3 to 5 years in the Concordia University Day Care Center, seemed to indicate that children below the age of five desire privacy and display a variety of behavior patterns which, while less sophisticated than those of the adolescent or the adult, may be classified as privacy seeking behavior mechanisms.

Entrance into school is one of the life experiences which contributes to the child's sense of autonomy and self-identity. When children are separated from their parents they must learn how to tend to their own needs. While a day care center is not a school experience in the formal sense, it does separate the child from his parents for prolonged periods of time and in this situation the child must function independently. The communal nature of the day care center tends to limit the opportunity for privacy and the children find less time and fewer places in which to be alone than they might have had were they at home. The manner in which the young child in the day care center resolves the problem of reduced time and space for privacy is the subject of this paper.

II A Matrix of Privacy Types

Adults tend to display a variety of verbal and non-verbal behavioral mechanisms which indicate a desire for privacy. Research indicates that there are various desired levels of privacy (alone with a small group of people; alone with one

other person; all alone) and that the ideal level of privacy is an internal personal state in which a person or group develps momentary desires for certain levels of input and output to and from others (Altman, 1975). Consequently, a person will set in motion a series of mechanisms to adjust self boundaries so as to realize the mementary desired level of privacy. The mechanisms displayed by adults range from verbal privacy seeking, to the non-verbal use of the body (in moving away from an intruder), to environmental behavior such as personal space and territory and other culturally defined norms (Altman, 1975).

The variation with age in the definitions of privacy provided by the children in Wolfe and Laufer's study (1974) and the wide variety of behavioral mechanisms employed by privacy seeking adults, led to the formulation of a number of hypotheses about the young child's patterns of behavior in the day care center: (1) that the young child in the day care center would seek privacy, and (2) that this behavior would be influenced by (a) the time of day; (b) the degree of structure of the activity in which the child was involved; (c) the area in which the child was playing; (d) the age and sex of the child.

A pilot study revealed that children tend to express their desire for privacy in a more forthright manner than the adults. Consequently, a revision was made of the behavioral mechanisms to be observed. The patterns most frequently displayed by the children were verbal and nonverbal territorial behavior; verbal and nonverbal defence of personal space; and verbal and nonverbal

physical privacy seeking. These behavioral patterns and settings are described below.

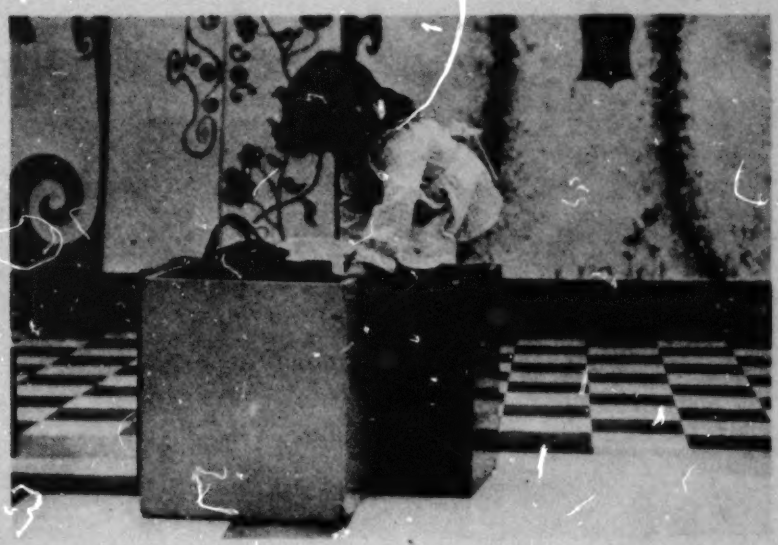
Territorial Behavior

A territory may be defined as a delimited space that a person or group uses or defends as an exclusive preserve. The mutually exclusive use of these areas and/or objects by persons or groups is labeled as territorial behavior (Altman and Haythorn, 1967). Inherent in territorial behavior is a psychological identification with a place symbolized by an attitude of possessiveness and arrangement of objects in the area (Pastalan, 1970). A striking example of this behavior is the college student's possessive behavior towards the seat which he/she has chosen as his/her own in each lecture hall where the seating is unassigned and open to choice. There is a tendency to sit in one specific seat and to consider it an affront when a "stranger" sits in the student's seat (unassigned though it may be). Territorial behavior reflects the desire to possess and occupy portions of space and when necessary, to defend them against intrusion by others. A child may express this behavior on a verbal level, by shouting "S'mine, don't touch!"; or on a nonverbal level, he may push away the hand of the child who is attempting to take a toy which he is using.

Privacy seeking behavior is reinforced by territorial symbols as in the drawing of lines of demarcation and erection of barriers. For example, during our observations, two children in the child care center placed two large chairs facing each other and rather than sitting on the chairs, they sat on the floor

between the chairs and proceeded to play a game of cards. They used these chairs as barriers rather than as seating.

During another observation, one child who had been building in the block area approached a child who was seated nearby on the floor reading. The builder sat down next to the reader and looked at the book. Within seconds, the builder had returned to the block shelves, selected four rectangular blocks and rejoined the reader on the floor. As he sat on the floor, the builder placed the blocks around the periphery of himself and the reader and in so doing, had defined a space and created an enclosure into which no one else was permitted to enter.



Display of territorial behavior.

Defense of Personal Space

Altman defines personal space as an invisible bubble immediately around the body and intrusion into this space by others leads to discomfort. Hall (1961) conceives of personal space as having a broader set of boundaries, and describes it as a series of spatial spheres with the differences in zones corresponding to the types of interpersonal encounters which are possible in each zone.

The first zone covers a range of 0 to 18 inches--an intimate distance reserved for intimates; proximity in this first zone is frowned on in public. Penetration of this zone by anyone other than an intimate produces an unpleasant feeling and one sends out signals which convey this uneasiness and displeasure.

The second zone spans a range of 1½ to 4 feet. This personal zone is reserved for friends in communication with one another and it is the transitional zone between "intimate" contact and rather formal public behavior (Altman, 1975).

The third zone ranges from 4 feet to 12 feet; it is the general social distance at which business and general social contact occurs. This seems to be the natural and comfortable distance for North American adults working with one another in an office. The farther they situate themselves from one another, the more formal is the social contact.

The last zone involves the space beyond the 12 foot limit of social distance and extends to 25 feet. This space is reserved for formal occasions, lectures, and courtrooms. Within this

range there is a reserved form of communication with little warmth being projected and the richness of communication becoming more difficult.

By altering the distance and angle of orientation from others, one can regulate the intensity of communications with others. Gesture, posture and distance affect the richness of communication and as such, personal space serves as an effective boundary control mechanism. Children in our study expressed this behavior on a verbal level by shouting "Get offa me!" and on the nonverbal level, by shifting away from the individual who has placed himself on the arm of the chair where the child was seated.

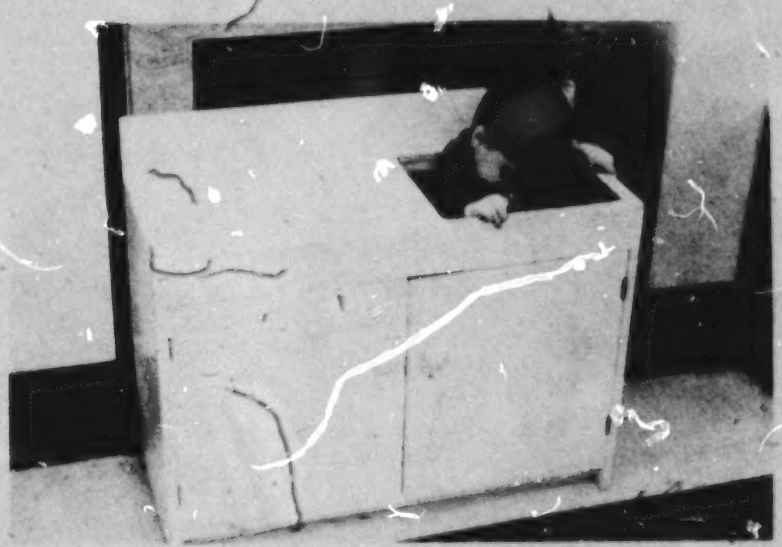
Physical Privacy Seeking

Physical privacy may be defined as a physical separation of the person or group from other persons or groups by the placement of visible barriers between the self and others or between the group and others. These barriers may be erected by the person for the sole purpose of physical separation or they may be existing barriers which the person manipulates to satisfy the need for physical privacy. Closed doors, partitions, portable screens and bookshelves may serve as barriers which, placed between self and others, indicates that a person wishes to be apart from others.

In our study, we observed children who expressed this desire for physical privacy on a verbal level by stating, "I'm going to the house to be alone." This desire was expressed on the nonverbal level by the child slipping under a table and pulling

the chairs in around the table.

These privacy seeking behaviors form a matrix of types for the purpose of observation within each of 4 activity areas studied. Verbal and nonverbal actions form one axis, and territory, personal space, and physical privacy form the other axis.



Display of physical privacy seeking

III Observations Vis-à-Vis The Matrix

The observations in this study were carried out in the Concordia University Child Care Center. The center is composed of one 58 foot x 30 foot room with 15 foot high ceilings. For the purpose of this observation, the room was divided into four activity grids. The areas which formed these grids were the

block and sand area, the play-dough and housekeeping area, the games area, and the alley.

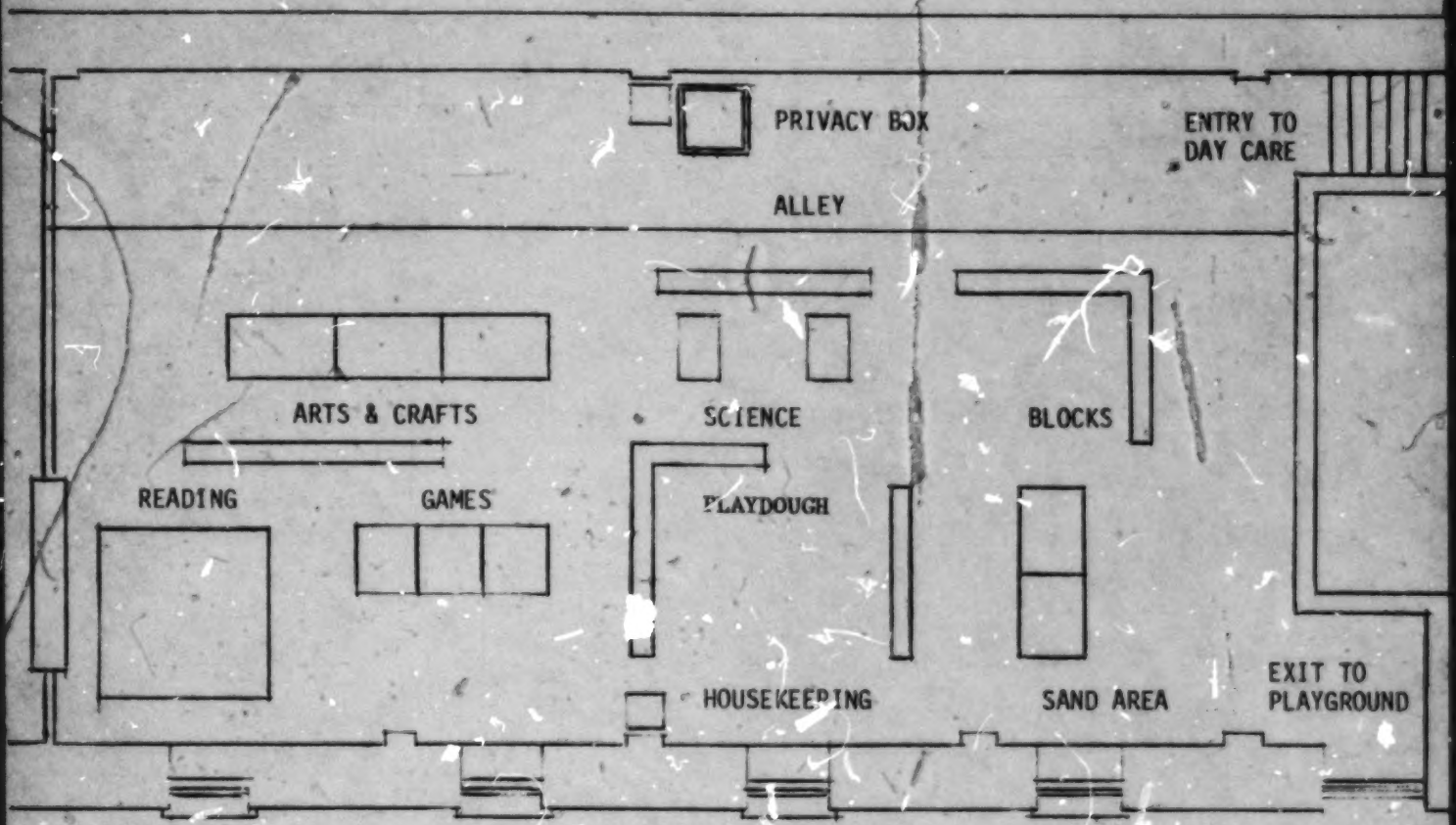


FIGURE I : Concordia University, Sir George Williams Campus Day Care Centre

The block and sand areas are situated side by side with the sand tables being closer to the exit to the playground. The sand area contains two large tables filled with dry sand and the children are permitted to mix this sand with water. Various sand toys are housed in large wooden boxes near the sand tables. The

block area is well defined on two sides by large shelves placed at right angles. There is a thin carpet on the floor in the block area. This provides enough warmth without disturbing the stable base required for block-building.

The play-dough and housekeeping area is located in the middle of the windowed wall between the sand and games areas. The housekeeping area contains all of the equipment representative of that which is commonly used in a real kitchen. The two stoves and cabinets are large enough to store all of the kitchen supplies, and a number of the children enjoy slipping into these cupboards for what seems to be a momentary respite. There is a dress-up corner with a large trunk full of clothes and small cubbies are filled with a wide selection of hats, purses and shoes. The two tables in this area are commonly used for the play-dough activities which the children associate with baking and cooking.

The games area is the farthest away from the main flow of traffic. In this area one large steel cabinet contains the more complex and intricate materials (construction toys, puzzles and table games). Three square tables are placed together to form a long rectangular one where the children sit to use these materials. The reading center is located at the far end of this carpeted area where the children can sit on the carpet and recline against either of the two walls. There are two large windows which let a great deal of natural light flow into this area.

The alley is formed by a set of partitions which separate that area of the room from the government authorized usuable space.

This long alley is used as a pass through from the entrance into the Center to the various play areas. In the confines of the alley a large cardboard appliance box is located that the children call "the house." It consists of three windows and a door which can be opened and closed at the will of the "inhabitants."

IV Method

Sample

The sample was composed of the 60 children registered at the Concordia University Day Care Center and at the time when the study was conducted, the children ranged in age from 34 months to 66 months. Eighty-eight percent of the children were children of the university students, nine percent were children of faculty members and three percent were children of university staff members

Procedure

The observational method of event sampling was used in this study. Two observers, equipped with specifically designed recording sheets, spent fifteen minutes in each of the four designated areas in the morning and the afternoon free play periods. If a behavior continued beyond the 15 minute period, it was observed until it ended. The recording sheets were designed to provide the observer with room for anecdotal recording whenever time permitted. The name of the privacy seeker was entered in the appropriate behavioral setting area and the time of the beginning and end of the behavior was recorded. Thus a record was kept of the frequency and duration of the privacy behaviors exhibited in each area. The observations were carried out for a three

month period. The mean overall observer reliability coefficient was .84 (SD = ± .08). The study was carried out in the last three months of the day care term at a time when most of the children had been at the center for six months and seemed to be comfortably integrated in the center, well over any separation anxiety.

Results

An analysis of variance indicated that age was not a highly significant factor in the mode of expression of privacy seeking. ($F = 2.337$ $p < .099$)

An analysis of variance of the data across all areas revealed that the frequency of verbal territorial behavior was significantly higher in the alley than in all other areas ($F = 4.693$ $p < .006$).

Across all areas the difference in the duration of nonverbal territorial behavior was not highly significant. ($F = 2.349$ $p < .084$)

Across all areas there was no significant difference in the frequency and/or duration of the defense of personal space on the nonverbal level. ($F = 2.225$ $p < .102$)

There was slight significance in the frequency of defense of personal space on the verbal level in the games area. ($F = 2.566$ $p < .093$)

There was slight significance in the duration of defense of personal space in the verbal level in the games area. ($F = 2.566$ $p < .093$)

An analysis of variance indicated that the frequency of nonverbal privacy seeking behavior was significantly higher in the alley and play-dough/housekeeping areas than in the other areas ($F = 5.662$ $p < .002$) and the duration of nonverbal privacy seeking behavior was significantly longer in this area ($F = 3.261$ $p < .05$).

On a two-way analysis of variance, area and time interact to influence the frequency of privacy seeking behavior ($F = 9.512$ p .002). A further breakdown of the data revealed that privacy seeking behavior occurred more frequently in the alley in the afternoon than in the morning ($t = -4.44$ $p < .001$) In looking at the type of privacy seeking behavior expressed, physical privacy was expressed more frequently in the alley in the afternoon ($t = -4.14$ $p < .01$)

A two-way analysis of variance indicated that the duration of privacy seeking behavior was influenced by area and time ($F = 3.677$ $p < .05$). A further analysis revealed that the difference in the duration of privacy seeking was significantly greater in the alley in the afternoon as compared to the morning ($t = 2.15$ $p < .05$) and that physical privacy seeking was of significantly greater duration in the alley in the afternoon ($t = -21.0$ $p < .05$).

The frequency and duration counts of the morning and afternoon observations were weighted (x 200) and a tabulation of these weighted measures indicated that of the 60 children registered in the day care center, 11 males and 12 females displayed privacy seeking behavior more frequently and for a

long duration than the other children in the center. These 23 children range in age from 35 months to 63 months with a mean age of 49.3 months and represent 33 1/3 percent of the total day care population. Fifty-seven percent of these privacy seekers are only children and thirty percent are the youngest in their family by an average of five years. Only eight percent of the children are the eldest siblings in the family and four percent are the middle child in their family.

Discussion

Both the Schwartz (1968) and Wolfe and Laufer (1975) studies indicate that a child's mode of expression of a desire for privacy becomes more complex with age. The findings of our study indicate that age was not a highly significant factor in the mode of expression of privacy seeking within the 3-5 year age group. Perhaps this is due to the unique population of subjects, all of whom are children of university students, faculty and staff members. Most of the children are highly verbal and the program at the center stresses verbalization.

The results of the study indicate that privacy seeking behavior occurred more frequently in the alley in the afternoon and that physical privacy was the type of behavior most commonly displayed there. Many of the children spent upwards of nine hours per day in the day care center and by the late afternoon (free play period was scheduled from 4-5 p.m.) the children exhibited a need to be alone away from large groups of children. As the alley was visually divided from the rest of the room by

a series of partitions, this area satisfied their needs. The alley was also the place where the "house" was located. Two or three children could slip into the house and still have a comfortable amount of elbow room.

The results indicate that the frequency of verbal territorial behavior was significantly higher in the alley than in the other areas. Children were observed bringing their most treasured possessions into the alley and into the house. The house seemed to be viewed as a place in which one did not have to abide by the "rules of sharing", which one seemed to have to do 'out in the open'. Therefore, when an intruder entered the house he was bombarded with verbal threats and directives.

The games area, as described in section III, was set aside for quiet table top play. Each toy in that area was housed in a large steel cabinet and the children were required to ask the teacher to remove the toy from the cabinet and had to use that item at the table in the games area. All of these toys required protracted concentration and the children were made aware that this was to be a quiet work area. The children were not permitted to remove these toys to a more secluded area and as a result, they frequently found themselves under seige from invaders into their territory. As this space was designated as a quiet area, the children resorted to significantly more non-verbal territorial behavior as a means of defending their territory and their possessions.

The results also showed that the frequency of nonverbal physical privacy seeking was significantly higher in the alley and the play-dough areas. In both of these areas there were structures which were large enough to permit children to enter the structures and sit in seclusion and were used frequently by the privacy seekers for that purpose.

The group of children classified as privacy seekers are highly representative of the total day care population where the mean age is 50 months. Fifty-three percent of the total population are the only children in the family, while thirty-one percent are the youngest in the family by five years. This unusual set of proportions seems to be influenced by the segment of the population from which the day care draws its children.

In the pilot project both structured and unstructured activities were observed and not one incident of privacy seeking behavior occurred in the structured activities during the entire three weeks of observations. Therefore, the study was redesigned to examine behavior in specific areas during free play. It seemed that the teacher's presence was most influential as the children appeared to be less daring to impose on another's territory and/or personal space whenever the teacher was present. During the pilot study a decision was made to eliminate the crafts area from the study as a teacher was always stationed in the area. She was responsible for setting up and maintaining the crafts activity, which made this a rather structured situation. No privacy seeking behavior was evidenced in this area during the entire three week pilot study.

CONCLUSION

V Implications For Private Time and Space

If one-third of the young children in a day care environment employed easily distinguishable behavioral mechanisms in order to achieve moments of privacy, then careful consideration must be given to the reasons underlying this privacy seeking behavior.

Children in a day care centre are in a communal setting--one in which they play, learn, eat and sleep together, for upwards of nine hours per day. Therefore, it is not surprising that a child would indicate via verbal and/or nonverbal means that he/she wishes to withdraw from group interaction and from the demands of other children. Private moments are essential as they afford the young child the opportunity for development of autonomy, for emotional release, the assimilation of information and the assessment of interactions between the self and other.

Leontine Young (1966) maintains that there is no individuality without privacy. For one to come to terms with one's thoughts and feelings, the opportunity to ponder alone is essential. The development of independence requires time for sheltered experimentation and the testing of ideas in thought and practice without fear of public ridicule. Children may practice a skill in private until they have mastered it and then will reappear, and triumphantly display their accomplishment to their peers.

Children, like adults, have standards of behavior that are higher than they can maintain at all times, and these standards are widely shared by the society in which they live. If they do not observe these standards, they risk criticism and loss of self-esteem. Sharing is one of the rules of the pre-school setting. All children are expected to share, but nine hours of sharing can become a little arduous, and children frequently express the desire to possess a toy for an indefinite period of time. Denial of this expressed desire can lead to anti-social behavior on the part of the child and bring about admonition from an adult. One can satisfy the child's desire by providing private moments in which the standards of behavior are relaxed and the pressures of social rules are dropped, and the child can resort to the possessive behavior.

The day care environment provides constant emotional stimulation from which children require periodic respites throughout the day. Children often require time and a private place in which to release their emotions without being admonished or ridiculed. They need a place to release a flood of tears, to suck a thumb, or to express anger. Private places plus recognized "time out" for venting feelings meet this need. One child in our day care centre used the box as a safe place in which to vent his anger. He would run to the box, open the door and slip in, and upon closing the door, he would yell "[illegible]y dummy kid!" then he would slip out and rejoin the activity.

Children require time to process the information which is constantly passed on to them throughout the day. Without time to be alone with their thoughts, they cannot assimilate what they have learned, nor can they evaluate the information, and accommodate to the new ideas which have been presented to them. They require private moments in which to reflect and to organize information. Children have been known to come back long after a discussion, and ask questions which reveal that a child has pondered an issue, e.g. what was that other name for the frog and salamander family? (amphibians)

Privacy meets the needs of the individual, to integrate his experiences into a meaningful pattern and to exert his individuality on events (Westin, 1970). Children require a private time in which to assess the outcome of their social interactions, to take inventory of their conduct, and to reflect upon the effectiveness of their behavior. A child who has been involved in a social encounter which leaves one child crying and the other one racing from the scene in search of a private retreat, requires a quiet, private place where he can work things through without interruption or interference. The effectiveness of these private periods are not in direct proportion to the length of time spent in privacy, i.e. a short period at the right time has optimal effect.

VI Privacy Implications For Teaching and Programming in the Day Care Setting

The communal nature of day care centres runs counter to the idea of privacy, and rather than simply accepting the privacy seeking behavior as a natural occurrence within the day care centre, many teachers tend to be concerned about the etiology of the child's privacy seeking behavior. Some teachers feel threatened by the young privacy seeker's behavior, as they believe that the quest for privacy which draws the child out of the mainstream of activity is brought on by boredom. They have been taught that children will respond to unstructured programmes which stimulate their curiosity and require active involvement. Therefore, the teacher who is confronted with children displaying privacy seeking behavior will naturally begin a careful re-examination of the day's program with a view to providing more stimulation for these children when in fact more momentary respites from group encounters are required. Some teachers label the privacy seeker as a loner or isolationist and consequently try to re-orient the child into the mainstream of activity, which is exactly what the child is attempting to avoid. Teachers who are unaware of, or have not accepted the idea of a child's need for privacy, may respond to privacy seekers in one of the following ways. He/she may resort to the "frontal assault, "which involves invading the child's territory and integrating him into an activity; or "guerrilla warfare", which involves sending one or more children into the domain of the

privacy seeker, and thereby forcing an interaction between the child and his peers; or "honorable surrender", which involves inducing the child to abandon his privacy by extending to him an invitation he finds hard to refuse.

As adults tend to control the time and space of young children, particularly in the preschool years, it is pertinent that they understand the motivation of the privacy seeker, are cognizant of the privacy seeking mechanisms and accepting of the need for privacy in the holistic development of the young child.

The results of this study indicate that privacy seeking behavior tends to be influenced by the activity area and the time of day. It was observed that children exhibited a significant amount of nonverbal territorial behavior in the games area. The amount of play space in this area was delimited by the size of the table top and the number of chairs which could be placed around the table. The chairs were far too large for one child, but not large enough for two to share the seat and when two chairs were placed together the arms of the chairs served as barriers inhibiting rather than encouraging interaction. Therefore, the chair and the height of the arms defined a specific space at the table in front of each child. Being enclosed like that made it difficult for the child to view those around him until the intruder was virtually on top of him and then he tended to spring to defend his toy. Perhaps if the child had the opportunity to define his own space--by placing two chairs

close together and others farther apart, and if he could see other children approaching quite easily, there would be a decrease in the impulse to protect one's property (toys). In this area the play materials were unique and in short supply, consequently territorial behavior was exhibited frequently for the sole purpose of being able to use a material without interruption from peers. Frequent display of this type of behavior ought to alert teachers to the necessity of having a greater supply of these materials. Perhaps it would be wise to relax rules which restrict the use of materials to a particular space that is vulnerable to intrusion by others.

In both the housekeeping area and the alley, there appeared to be a significant amount of nonverbal physical privacy seeking. The furnishings in both of those areas were conducive to physical privacy--a child could climb into a cupboard and close the door, or into the trunk and cover himself with clothes, or in the alley, he could slip into the "house" and close the windows and the door. It is essential to select or construct furnishings which offer children this type of option.

As day care centers are frequently housed in a large, one-room area, such as a church hall, or as in our case, a masonic temple, it is necessary to subdivide an area of this nature into smaller interrelated units of space and in so doing, one can plan for privacy and still maintain an arrangement which permits a natural flow from one activity area to another. Functional partitions (bookshelves and block shelves) no higher than 3½ feet

provide a sense of division and separation but not a feeling of isolation. Flexible partitions (those on wheels and light in weight) permit the rearrangement of areas to encompass smaller or larger spaces. Furniture which is light enough for children to move makes it possible for them to redesign spaces in order to satisfy their momentary needs for privacy.

Furniture which has been designed with open spaces as an integral component provides children with another place of retreat for private moments. Within each classroom it is wise to have a structure specifically designed for quiet private or semi-private activities. This structure should be located within the safe, observable confines of the room. A well-designed loft can meet these qualifications; the top of the loft may seat upwards of three children, while the space under the loft can provide a quiet spot for an equal number of children. Here children can be alone, yet observed and as they are neither visually nor auditorily isolated from the ongoing activities within the room, they can rejoin the group without interrupting the group activity.

Naptime in a large room can be a trying experience for children and staff alike. Setting up portable partitions around the cots provides the child with enough of a visual barrier so that he has a sense of privacy, and will not be easily disturbed. This shortens the "falling asleep" period significantly and provides the child with a necessary sense of enclosure.

Recognition of the need for private moments will alter

a teacher's traditional view of the function of spaces within a room. This will lead to a reduction of the teacher's desire to draw the children out of the more private places and into the public areas of the room. A staircase may be seen as serving a dual purpose both as a private retreat and a passthrough from an upper to a lower area. The bathroom will be viewed as a place where children may toilet themselves, but also as a private place where they may leisurely run water over their hands and chat to themselves in the mirror.

Programming

If one offers unstructured play periods in the late afternoon it would be wise to expect and plan for a significantly higher frequency of physical privacy seeking than that which occurred in the morning. Programming for privacy can be interpreted as providing children with time to be alone. It might involve setting up some interest centers designed for use by an individual or small group of children.

A further study is now underway to determine the level of self-concept and self-identity of the privacy seeker as compared to the non-privacy seeker.

Footnotes

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